



State of Arizona  
Department of Education

Tom Horne  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction



## Early Childhood Education Alert

ECSE 4

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### To Early Childhood Special Education Administrators – Vision Screenings

The Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS) has Recommended Guidelines for vision screenings by Arizona public, charter and private schools. A child's vision must be part of the screening process (AAC R7-2-401) prior to proceeding with assessing a preschool child to determine eligibility for preschool special education services. Otherwise, a child's poor performance on an assessment may be primarily due to vision issues rather than cognitive deficits. Therefore, it is not permissible to indicate on evaluation reports that the child was "unable to be tested" nor is the use of "functional vision" tools permissible.

#### State Recommendations/Guidelines

In the State of Arizona, the minimum recommended vision screenings are listed below. Additional screenings beyond these guidelines are encouraged if time and resources are available. The recommended minimum vision screening for children ages 9 years and younger include the following:

- Distance Visual Acuity
- Stereopsis
- Color Deficiency (only if required by school district)

While Arizona Department of Education does not endorse any one product or service, our sources in the field tell us they use LEA symbol cards. Conduct an internet search for "LEA Vision Cards" to find sources from which to purchase. An organization called "Prevent Blindness" may be able to provide Photoscreening for a fee. The source at Prevent Blindness said many organizations are moving toward a tool called Sure Sight, which is similar to Photoscreener in that it is a passive tool and costs around \$4,000.00. If a child cannot be conditioned for the LEA symbols they should be referred out to be screened with one of the more passive tools. A school nurse and/or vision specialist may also be good resources for products or services.

#### Resource Links

Department of Health Services, [http://azdhs.gov/phs/owch/pdf/vision\\_screening\\_2004.pdf](http://azdhs.gov/phs/owch/pdf/vision_screening_2004.pdf)  
Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-401(D)(6), [http://www.azsos.gov/public\\_services/Title\\_07/7-02.htm#Article\\_4](http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Title_07/7-02.htm#Article_4)

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